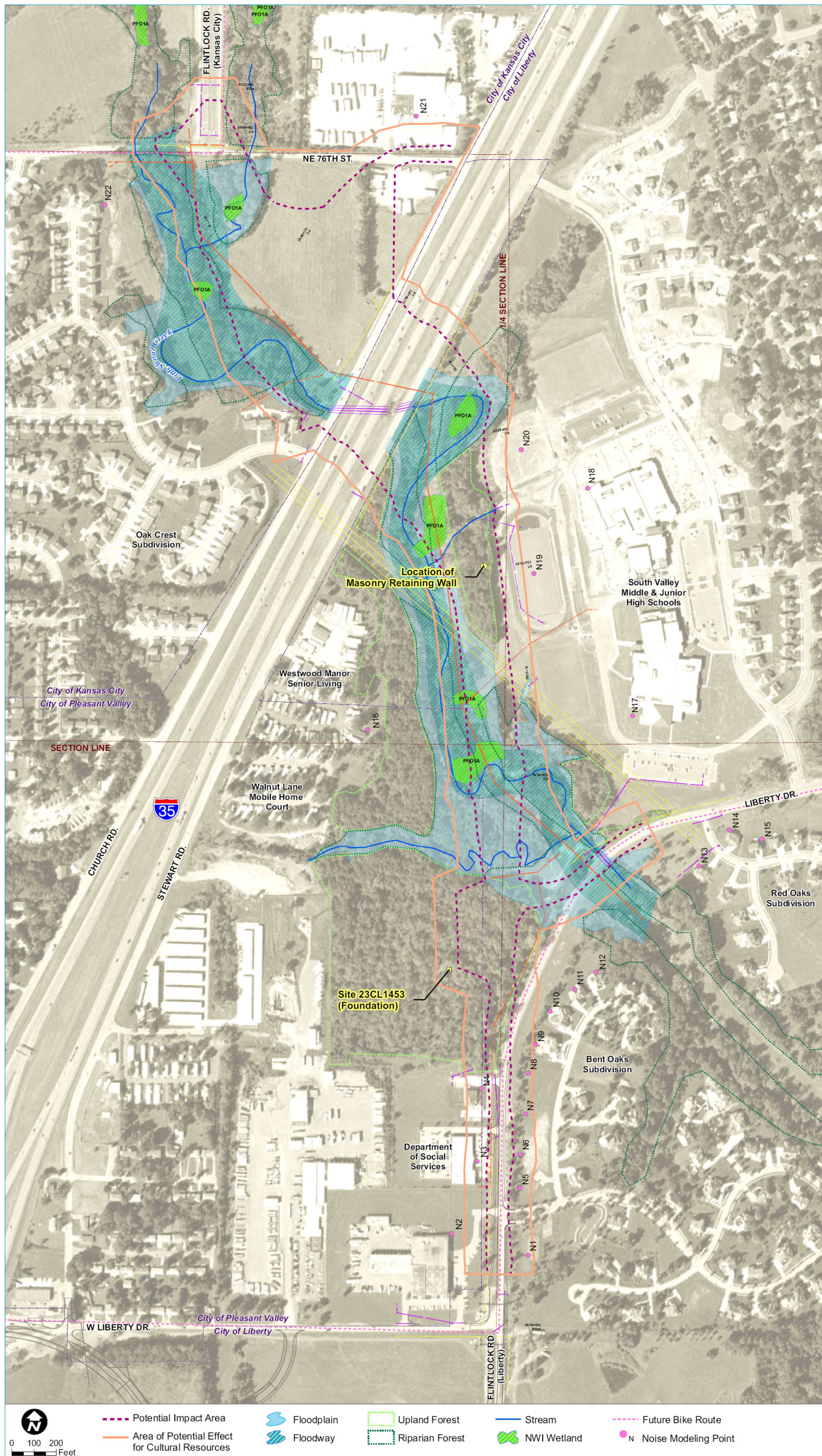


Environmental Considerations



Community and man-made features are an important consideration in the Environmental Assessment process. The Draft EA evaluates how the proposed roadway might impact the community, people, parks, schools, homes, businesses and historic sites as well as utilities and other roadways.

Impacts to natural features are evaluated. In this area, the most obvious natural feature is Shoal Creek. The proposed Flintlock Overpass should not significantly change how much or how fast water flows through the creek both upstream and downstream from the project.

There must also be an assessment of whether or not there are any threatened or endangered species in the area, and if so, how the project might avoid or mitigate impacts those species. Additionally, there needs to be an assessment of possible noise and air impacts.

The critical question in the EA Process: Can steps be taken to minimize or avoid negative impacts while addressing the project purpose and need?

Design Considerations: Safety

Safety is the critical element in planning a new roadway. Local and national design speed criteria dictates how much a road can curve, how steep hills can be and from what distance drivers must be able to see approaching intersections based on design speed.

The width of roadway, shoulders, as well as the location and width of medians, sidewalks or bike paths are also important considerations.



Design Considerations: Connectivity

Connecting Flintlock and Liberty Drive will improve capacity across I-35 and will serve communities on both sides of the Interstate. Intersections could be controlled by a stop sign, signal or roundabout.

At Flintlock and 76th Street, there are existing bridges that must also be considered in terms of impacts and need for rehabilitation.



Design Considerations: Bridging I-35 & Shoal Creek

Bridges have special design considerations in addition to safety concerns. Piers must be located appropriately in terms of both water flow and terrain, including the underlying geology.

With these considerations, costs must be also weighed. Longer spans are usually more expensive, and bridges that include curves in the road are typically more expensive than straight bridges.

